4 HAZARDS

The workplace hazards identified as present at DFS fall into the major categories below. In addition, many workplace activities present multiple hazards, e.g., a chemical explosion may result in puncture wounds, burns and chemical exposures. These hazards are inherent to the varied types of work performed, and equipment and supplies used, by DFS employees, but may also arise from the materials being handled during that work, i.e., the evidence.

4.1 Physical/Mechanical

Hazards in this classification cause injury (cuts, bruises, breaks, crushing injuries) by contact, usually in a violent/energetic manner. All DFS employees are subject to injury from "ordinary accidents" such as falls, cuts and automobile collisions; some employees are also subject to "unusual" physical hazards such as mechanical explosions, firearm projectiles (bullets), hydraulic presses, and compressed gas cylinders.

4.2 Thermal

Hazards in this classification cause injury (burns) by direct contact with a hot or cold surface/material or, infrequently, by radiation of heat from an extremely hot surface/material. All DFS employees are subject to burns from common heat sources such as coffee makers, hot water, etc.; some employees use additional heated equipment/materials such as hotplates, ovens, steam, etc. Cryogenic hazards are largely limited to the use of liquid nitrogen.

4.3 Electrical

Hazards in this classification cause injury (burns, electrocution) by the passage of electrical current through or very near the body. All DFS employees are subject to electrical injuries from the many electrical devices common in any workplace; some employees use/maintain/repair additional electrical equipment/instrumentation including some with high voltage/current sources.

4.4 Chemical

Hazards in this classification cause injury by contact by many different mechanisms – from health hazards such as corrosivity, toxicity and mutagenicity, to physical hazards resulting from chemical properties such as flammability and reactivity. All DFS employees are subject to such injuries from the many chemicals used in and stored for DFS operations; however, the probability of such an injury is higher among employees who use (many) chemicals routinely.

4.5 Biological

Hazards in this classification cause "injury" by the transmission of disease. All DFS employees are subject to such injuries from contact with biological materials, or, on rare occasions, insects or other small organisms in evidence.

4.6 Radiative

Hazards in this classification cause injury by the incidence of electromagnetic radiation (other than heat – 4.2 above) on the body. Some employees are subject to injuries from radiation sources such as lasers, ultraviolet lights and X-ray tubes.

♦End